

(1881); *Les Religions des non civilisés* (2 vol., 1883); *Les Religions du Mexique, de l'Amérique centrale et du Pérou* (Hibbert Lectures, French edition, 1885); *La Religion Chinoise* (1889); *Jésus de Nazareth* (2 vol., 1897). M. Réville's *Manual of Religious Instruction* has been translated in several languages. As appears from one of the above-cited works, he has been a Hibbert lecturer and he is also known in this country as a contributor to *The New World*, of Boston.

M. Jean Réville is the son of M. Albert Réville, and has been scarcely less active than his father in the field of religious investigation. He was born in Rotterdam, Holland, in 1854, is also a Doctor of Theology, and one of the Protestant leaders of France. He occupies the post of chaplain in the Lyceum of Henry IV. at Paris, and has been a lecturer on the History of the Christian Church at the École des Hautes Études at the Sorbonne since 1886 as well as at the Faculty of Protestant Theology since 1894; he has also been editor of the *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* since 1884.

His principal works are as follows: *La doctrine du Logos dans le IV^e Évangile et dans les œuvres de Philon* (1881); *La Religion à Rome sous les Sévères* (1886; German translation by G. Krüger in 1888); *Les Origines de l'Épiscopat* (1894); and *Paroles d'un libre-croyant* (1898).

THE CURVE OF IMMORTALITY.

We have printed as an Appendix to the present number of *The Open Court* an essay which is likely to be of real interest to many of our readers, and which for others will possess at least the attraction of a curiosity. The author, who is a septuagenarian, was for several years a University professor of Astronomy and subsequently for a third of a century scientific editor of one of the great Chicago dailies.

To forestall at the outset all possibility of misunderstanding, attention should be called to the fact that the author does not claim for his argument the value of a *proof* of the doctrine of sentient existence after death and that he expressly remarks that it would be "absurd" to do so. In addition to this explicit reservation of the author, we would insist on the following independent and general critical point of view which should be carefully pondered by the reader both before and after his perusal of the argument. Mathematics, being in one of its aspects, the science of form and of the combinations of form, there is no formal relation conceivable that cannot be expressed by it. Its world of pure and possible forms is absolutely inexhaustible, and is infinitely richer than the world of material and physical forms. It does not follow therefore that because a mathematical relation exists there must exist corresponding to it in the so-called objective world some definite physical reality. We have geometries of n -dimensions but no worlds of n -dimensions. Now as to the peculiarity of the curve in question, namely its completeness in one of its parts and the break in its continuity, it is to be remarked that it shares this property with a very large number of other algebraical curves, and that these curves present such "infinite variety" that there is scarcely a dogma of religion so wild or exceptional that could not be put into very close analogy with some one of them. It would be very easy, for example, to construct or find an analogy in algebraical geometry for the Buddhist doctrine of the transmigration of souls, or of the dogma of cycles of existence. In sum, the mechanism for graphically representing algebraical possibilities, which Descartes gave us, is far more powerful and comprehensive than even the wildest fancies of the founders and dog-

matists of the great historical religions. A skilful algebraical geometer could give the author of Revelation his tit for tat at every turn.

T. J. McC.

DR. ISAAC M. WISE.

We have learned with deep regret of the death of Dr. Isaac M. Wise, of Cincinnati. Dr. Wise was the Nestor of the Jewish rabbis in America, and as pastor of the B'ne Jeshurun congregation was for a great number of years the protagonist of reformed Judaism in the West. His activity, however, was not limited to the pul-



ISAAC M. WISE.

pit, for he was also the author of a number of books and pamphlets, and was greatly interested in the theoretical questions of religion. He had been a reader of *The Open Court* from the beginning, and we exchanged from time to time letters on subjects of common interest. He was the founder of the Hebrew Union College, and had been its president since 1875. He also founded and was until his death president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. He founded the *American Israelite* and *Die Deborah*, and edited both to the last. Deceased was within a few days of his eighty-first birthday. His son Dr. Julius Wise, better known as *Nickerdown*, will largely continue his father's work on the Jewish press.